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The Florida Small Business Development Center Network is one of eight original SBDC pilot programs funded in 1976 by the U.S. Small Business Administration to successfully link the state's education system to community outreach, utilizing both faculty and students to aid in the development and education of the state's entrepreneurs and small business community. Today, the FSBDC is a statewide network of 32 centers involving seven universities, six community colleges, two Chambers of Commerce and one county Economic Development Council.

Leveraging Expertise to Accelerate Knowledge



L-R: Victoria Peake, SBDC; Elizabeth Rodriguez, Institute for Business Training; Edward Mangold, SCORE; Jonel F. Robinson, Loan Officer SBA Miami; John Dunn, Jr, Chief Finance, SBA Miami; Delia Muckinhampt, Community Educator's Credit Union; Ben Herрман, The Bank Brevard; Jim Chastain, Community Bank of the South

- U. S. Small Business Administration South Florida District Office representatives were at Brevard Community College Regional Small Business Development Center on January 16, 2003 for a Congressional Briefing and SBA Express and Export Express Training. Lynn Douthett, SBDC Project Director, conducted the Congressional Briefing. Jonel Robinson, Loan Officer, and John Dunn, Jr., Chief of the South Florida finance division, provided training on SBA Express and Export Express.

- Janice Williams Donaldson and Cathy Hagan, UNF SBDC, attended the 17th Annual National Conference of the United States Association for Small Business and Entrepreneurship (USASBE), January 23-25. Attracting entrepreneurship faculty from colleges and universities across the nation, workshops and research presentations offered best practices in the area of entrepreneurial education. Donaldson and Hagan plan to share ideas with their fellow members of an ad-hoc committee in the Coggin College of Business created to advance further development of entrepreneurship curriculum at UNF.
- During the fourth quarter of 2002, FAU SBDC Director Nancy Young worked with two Ph.D.s on developing an administrator/instructor training Program Manual to further develop the SBDC training program. The manuals were completed in December and will be integrated into the training process in 2003. Both individuals work/have worked with Union Planters Bank developing, implementing and evaluating training programs for their chain of banks.

During her marketing and sales seminars, FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Ruby Ortiz has been introducing the concept of "Netweaving" for networking and public relations arenas. This concept was the result of research done in the area of public relations, in the book "Netweaving" by Bob Littell and the Internet site www.gitomer.com.

Engaging Students in Real-World Business Experiences

- USF SBDC Director Irene Hurst is teaching an upper-level entrepreneurship class at the USF College of Business that allows students to work directly with small business owners in solving entrepreneurial challenges and developing business and marketing plans. Five SBDC clients were chosen for this class.
- The FAU SBDC had work-study students working on various projects during the quarter. One student was very involved in preparing for the FAU SBDC ISO audit. The other students worked on training event and public relations' projects.
- Eunice Choi, UCF SBDC Associate Director, trained and supervised MBA students to help SBDC clients in the preparation of market penetration plans, pricing strategies, and competition analysis. All of the clients who received assistance expressed great appreciation and satisfaction.

Partnering with the Community to Promote Economic Development

- The UCF SBDC worked with the Orange County Board of County Commissioners to assist local businesses with Strategic Planning, Strategic Marketing and Emergency Preparedness. Business owners were provided with training sessions and supplementary materials to assist them with applying what they learned to their own situation.
- Certified Business Analyst Miguel Nieves represented the FAU SBDC by invitation at an event that was organized by the City of Homestead, in cooperation with the Beacon Council and the SBA. Miguel was able to promote SBDC services and provided the audience with important information about how the SBDC assists business owners in the preparation of the necessary documents for SBA financing.

The FAU SBDC added another location to its list of venues for seminars and one-on-one counseling. The new location, which is located in the City of Lauderhill, is staffed part-time by SBDC Certified Business Analyst Ondria Merriweather-Brown. Ondria attended various City of Lauderhill small business events, where she provided information about Lauderhill and SBDC small business resources.

- The USF SBDC is exploring the potential of funding support from the City of St. Petersburg to enhance its services at the City's Business Development Center. The SBDC continues to assist the under-served community in St. Petersburg through regularly-scheduled seminars and counseling. Through the support of the Hillsborough County Economic Development Council, the SBDC has expanded its services in the outlying areas of the county targeted by the Community Development Block Grant. This partnership will continue in 2003.
- Gary Beckert, Brevard C.C. SBDC's PTAC Specialist, was a featured speaker at the Economic Development Commission of Florida Space Coast's procurement program in December. SBDC Director Vicky Peake provided resources and counseling. Peake and Beckert are on the planning committees for the Brevard Small Business Assistance Council's winter workshops and outreach activities.

Providing Educational Programs that Inspire Creative Learning

- The UNF SBDC launched the region's first annual *Executive Leadership Series* - a four-part professional development training series designed to provide CEOs and senior managers of established, successful companies with the requisite insight and skills to lead their companies to the next level of success. Coordinated by the UNF SBDC and sponsored by JEA, CEO Service Bureau, and TEC, the four-part series began on October 16th and will feature one, specifically-focused, full-day CEO training event each quarter. As Jacksonville's small business market has continued to mature, the SBDC recognized a need to provide higher-level growth strategy services to those already-successful small and mid-sized businesses that want to grow their business or compete more effectively in today's business environment. The *Executive Leadership Series* focuses on a specific critical business issue, features a national speaker on the subject, and includes facilitated roundtable workshops with other CEOs from the region. The first workshop focused on communication skills and featured keynote speaker, Susan Scott, best-selling author of the book, *Fierce Conversations*. The three remaining workshops in the series will address financial management, marketing and sales, and transitioning from a manager to a leader, and are scheduled for February, May and October.
- Interesting new topics introduced by the FAU SBDC this quarter in Broward and Palm Beach counties included a program titled "The Principles of LEAN," which was a full-day, hands-on workshop co-sponsored by Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership. This workshop covered topics such as dramatically increasing productivity, significantly reducing operating costs and lead times, improving space utilization, quality of workmanship, teamwork and enhanced communication.

Securing Support to Expand Outreach to the Community

- During the fourth quarter, the FAU SBDC's Key West location focused its efforts on identifying and securing the participation of resource partners, which would allow for the expansion of the SBDC services to the Florida Keys. Discussions were held with both the Chamber of Commerce, as well as the Florida Keys Community College. In particular, SBDC Director Nancy Young and CBA Alex Sokoloff met with the management of the FKCC to discuss and propose a resource partnership in which the FKCC would assist the SBDC by providing office space, classroom facilities, library facilities and services for the SBDC library, and sharing marketing expenses for the SBDC program in the Keys. Proposals have been accepted by the FKCC and office space identified for the SBDC. A tentative date of mid-January was proposed to finalize the agreement.
- Hillsborough County will continue to financially support the USF SBDC in 2003. Because of this support, The SBDC is able to expand its outreach within the county.
- Brevard C. C. SBDC Director Vicky Peake is working with Dr. Carolyn Fausnaugh, a professor of entrepreneurship at Florida Tech, and Pat Fuller, BCC business professor, to explore opportunities to leverage Brevard's resources.

Capitalizing on Expertise to Enhance Outreach

- USF Advertising Counselor Jane Bunch has been works with the Tampa Advertising Federation board on a variety of projects.

USF Finance Counselor Jim Parrish met with a representative from Alliance Financial Capital to discuss the SBDC's Health Check service and other programs.

Judy Gray, USF SBDC, continues to pitched stories to the St. Petersburg Times, Tampa Tribune, Sarasota Herald Tribune, South Tampa News and TECO e-zine. Judy has also made a presentation on SBDC services to returning Naval reservists who own small businesses.
- FAU SBDC Director Nancy Young and CBA Carole Hart traveled to Minneapolis to attend "Creative Training Techniques", a program sponsored by The Bob Pike Group. CBA Jimmy Pinto traveled to Tampa in October for a tax-training workshop offered to the FSBDC Network by the IRS.

Collaborating to Educate and Increase Opportunities for Diversity

- FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Ondria Merriweather-Brown worked with the National Association of Women Business Owners and the Women's Chamber of Commerce to make these organizations aware of how the SBDC interfaces with women business owners. Ondria continues to develop relationships with women organizations, national private firms, government agencies and financial institutions to elevate the SBDC presence in the community.

FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Ondria Merriweather-Brown also coordinated a day-long "On the Spot Certification" with the State Office of Supplier Diversity. Thirty-six businesses registered and met with certification officers from the State to receive approval as minority businesses. Clients who were unable to get appointments were counseled on how to obtain certification.

FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Jimmy Pinto met with the Board of Directors of the Argentine Florida Chamber of Commerce to whom he made a presentation about FAU SBDC services and how these services would benefit members and others who approached the Chamber. It was determined that there are a number of Argentinean entrepreneurs who are immigrating to Miami due to economic, social and political reasons in the country. Many of these entrepreneurs come to the U.S. ready to invest, but need and look for guidance on how to proceed and how to develop their ideas in this country. After the meeting, the Directors agreed to have the FAU SBDC website address appear on their site.

- The BCC SBDC hosted informational sessions led by Linda Sherod of Patrick Air Force Base. Ms. Sherod requested partnering activities in response to very strict security measures currently at Patrick AFB. Discussions were held on mentor/protege and 8(a) programs.
- USF SBDC Assistant Director Eileen Rodriguez has been elected President of the West Coast Chapter of the National Minority Suppliers Development Council for the second consecutive year. She is instrumental in educating minority businesses about the certification processes for the State of Florida. She arranged for the state certifying agency to come to Tampa and conduct the on-the-spot certification.

USF SBDC Director Irene Hurst continues to serve on the Pluralism Committee for the Suncoast Girls Scouts, Inc.

USF SBDC Marketing Manager Judy Gray sits on the Board of ChairScholars, a foundation that partners with the Hillsborough Education Foundation to fund and pre-pay college scholarships for physically disabled and financially at-risk children in Hillsborough, Pinellas and Polk counties.

USF Director Irene Hurst has, La Gaceta, met with Tampa's only trilingual paper in an effort to reach out and target Tampa's Hispanic community. She has also met with the publisher of [Florida Trend](#) magazine. Irene participated in events with the Indonesian-US Chamber of Commerce. Hurst has also been tapped to serve as a judge in a high school business plan writing competition.

Fostering the Development of Global Relations

- FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Rafael Cruz had a display targeting "International Business and Trade to Broward County" in the SBRC, at the Broward County Main Library. Various books, articles and data were compiled and displayed for the benefit of the business patrons visiting the Center. Many positive compliments were given on the display and the information it provided. Rafael had an additional display targeting "International Business and Trade to the Caribbean" in the SBRC.

FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Parbatee N-Chang attended the following seminars during the quarter: "The Role the IDB can play in South Florida's Growing International Business Opportunities" and "International State of the State: The Importance of Free trade to Florida." Both seminars provided valuable information that will be shared with SBDC clients and seminar attendees.

- The USF SBDC was invited and participated in the Visiting International Professionals program hosted by the Florida Department of State.
- The Brevard Community College SBDC is promoting Custom House Brokerage and Freight Forwarding classes, as well as an Export Transaction Workshop.

Increasing Visibility and Awareness in the Community

- The FAU SBDC continued to provide counseling and training events at Office Depot stores in Palm Beach Gardens, Ft. Lauderdale and Miami. The program has been a success and Office Depot would like to expand into the SE United States. The Miami Office and training facility was opened with a ribbon-cutting event that generated a prominent article in the [Miami-Herald](#).

In recognition of small business owners who have supported the SBDC with their participation at Office Depot events, the SBDC offered three "Holiday Gatherings" in December, one at each of the stores. The gathering in Miami was an outstanding event, with 38 attendees.

- USF SBDC Director Irene Hurst served as Chair for Minority Business Awards sponsored by [The Tampa Bay Business Journal](#). The SBDC renewed its advertising contract with the [Business Journal](#) since they target the audience the SBDC strives to reach. [The Journal](#) has committed to sponsoring two of the SBDC's big events in 2003. By continuing to pro-actively pitch media stories, the SBDC keeps a level of awareness about SBDC programs. Irene Hurst has been interviewed about tips for small business owners facing deployments of reservist employees.

Judy Gray, Marketing and Public Relations Manager, spearheaded an event called the "News Schmooze" targeted to member of the Public Relations Society of America and Society of Professional Journalists. The goal was to improve working relationships between the two professions and highlight the area's growing thirst for business news.

- Al Polfer and Jason Frye, UCF SBDC, worked with planning committees for the development of the Disney/SBA National Entrepreneur Center. This center is a collaboration between Orange County, University of Central Florida, Small Business Administration and Disney to provide a one-stop shopping center for small business owners. Located within the center will be the UCF SBDC, the Orlando Chapter of SCORE, and representatives from several other assistance organizations. The SBA will also be present, and they will operate a Business Information Center within the National Entrepreneur Center.

Engaging Students in Real-World Business Experiences *continued from page 1*

- The Small Business Institute class was offered at the graduate level in the Fall semester, 2002. Fourteen students received "real-world" business experiences during the semester, assisting 13 small businesses with projects ranging from business planning, to loan packaging, to operations management, to marketing strategy. These clients received more than 1,865 hours of assistance from the students and their faculty instructor/mentor. All but one of the clients had previously received assistance from the UNF SBDC and were referred to the program by their SBDC business analyst.

Recognizing and Rewarding Excellence

- The FAU SBDC recognized Martin Nebojsic in December for the contributions he has made as a volunteer business analyst and instructor. Martin has extensive experience in accounting and tax services, business plans, business appraisals, and teaching tax seminars.

A plaque was received on November 19, 2002 from Office Depot in recognition of the FAU SBDC's ongoing commitment to provide small businesses with education, encouragement and support.

- Kris Manning, USF SBDC Office Manager, was nominated and received the Quiet Quality Award from the University of South Florida. Her hard work, dedication and commitment to the SBDC program and the university won her the award.

Judy Gray, USF SBDC Marketing Manager, was honored by the Tampa Bay Public Relations Society with an award for Outstanding Community Service, in January.

Demonstrating Commitment to Continuous Quality Improvement Excellence

- The management and staff of the FAU SBDC demonstrated their commitment towards full implementation of the ISO 9001:2000 Quality Management System. This was evident upon completion of the third party audit by the Registrar, International Management Systems Inc. After conducting a two and a half day full audit at the Boca Raton and Miami Offices, the lead auditor, at the closing meeting, announced that the FAU SBDC quality management system was effectively implemented, since he did not find any major nor minor non-conformities. He then announced that, based on the audit, the FAU SBDC will be recommended for ISO 9001:2000 Registration. This revelation was certainly rewarding to the management and staff of the FAU SBDC, who had worked assiduously over a period of two and a half years to develop and implement the system.

The staff continues to maintain their commitment, as outlined in their quality policy statement, to the process of continual improvement, meeting and exceeding customer's expectations and providing customer satisfaction. Furthermore, based on knowledge available, FAU SBDC is the first SBDC, nationally and internationally, to become registered to the ISO 9001:2000 standard.

- Starting this past December, strategic plan action items are being implemented and monthly progress reports generated at the USF SBDC. The SBDC continues to ask feedback from the attendees of its seminars and clients who come to the SBDC for counseling.

Exchanging Ideas and Knowledge for the Betterment of the Community

- FAU SBDC Certified Business Analyst Rafael Cruz, in his capacity as Director of the FAU / Broward Main Library Small Business Resource Center, met various times with the Director of BLG at the Library and the SBRC librarian to discuss aspects of the SBRC during the quarter. Rafael met with the department head of the BLG and the SBRC librarian to discuss the SBRC and new projects for the Center in the first quarter of 2003. These projects will focus on the needs of the Broward County small business community.

- Irene Hurst met with representatives from Seedco, an organization providing funding to not-for-profit organizations that provide social and educational services to youth. She provided them with resources and information about local networking for professionals who provide services to those not-for-profit companies.

Len Hamel of Sypris Electronics, LLC, was the USF SBDC's Volunteer of the Year. He is unflagging in his efforts to reach out to small businesses and network with other prime contractors. When former SBDC clients Jackie Brown and Connie White saw their calibration lab extinguished by a fire in January, Len stepped in to lend a helping hand. Networking with the community and other corporations, he rounded up furniture and found jobs for Quality Testing Labs personnel and a temporary home for the business as it struggles to rebuild. Though QTL is a competitor of Sypris, Hamel said he found the efforts of his colleagues in his corporation and at other corporations "heartwarming". Hamel, small business liaison for Sypris, says the bonds he has built with area small businesses and the SBDC, coupled with his conscience, compelled him to step forward.